LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A chewing gum coated by at least one layer, said layer comprising a coating material which is a composite of a slightly water-soluble calcium salt and a protein component, which salt is selected from the group consisting of fluoroapatite, carbonate-containing nonstoichiometric apatite, hydroxyapatite and fluorine-doped hydroxyapatite, wherein the slightly water-soluble calcium salt has a particle size less than 1000 nm.

Claim 2 (Canceled).

3. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 1, wherein the slightly water-soluble calcium salt has a particle size of 5 to 300 nm.

4. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 1, wherein the slightly water-soluble calcium salt is present in the form of rod-shaped crystals.

5. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 1, wherein the coating layer comprises 0.001 to 5% by weight of said coating material.

Claim 6 (Canceled).

7. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 1, wherein the protein component is selected from the group consisting of gelatin, caseine and hydrolyzates thereof.

8. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 1 wherein said coating material is coated by one or more surface-modification agents.

9. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 1 wherein at least one coating layer is a dragee-coated layer.

10. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 1, wherein the chewing gum comprises at least one sugar.

11. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 10, wherein at least one of the chewing gum and the coating layer comprises, as a sweetener, at least one of sucrose, invert liquid sugar, invert sugar syrup, glucose, glucose syrup, polydextrose, tagatose, trehalose, trehalulose, maltose, lactose, fructose, leucrose, palatinose, condensed palatinose, hydrogenated condensed palatinose, and mixtures thereof.

12. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 11 wherein at least one of the chewing gum and the coating layer comprises, as an additional sweetener, at least one of fructooligosaccharides, lactitol, sorbitol, xylitol, mannitol, maltitol, erythritol, 6-O-α-D-glucopyranosyl-D-sorbitol (1,6-GPS), 1-O-α-D-glucopyranosyl-D-sorbitol (1,1-GPS), 1-O-α-D-glucopyranosyl-D-mannitol (1,1-GPM) and mixtures thereof.

13. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 1, wherein the chewing gum is substantially sugar-free.

14. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 13, wherein the chewing gum and the coating layer comprise, as a sweetener, at least one of fructooligosaccharides, lactitol, sorbitol, xylitol, mannitol, maltitol, erythritol, 6-O-α-D-glucopyranosyl-D-sorbitol (1,6-GPS), 1-O-α-D-glucopyranosyl-D-sorbitol (1,1-GPS), 1-O-α-D-glucopyranosyl-D-mannitol (1,1-GPM) and mixtures thereof.

15. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 12 wherein the mixture is selected from the group consisting of an equimolar or virtually equimolar mixture of 1,6-GPS and 1,1-GPM (isomalt), a mixture of 1,6-GPS, 1,1-GPS and 1,1-GPM, a 1,6-GPS-enriched mixture of 1,6-GPS and 1,1-GPM having a 1,6-GPS content of 57% by weight to 99% by weight and a 1,1-GPM content of 43% by weight to 1% by weight, a 1,1-GPM-enriched mixture of 1,6-GPS and 1,1-GPM having a 1,6-GPS content of 1% by weight to 43% by weight and a 1,1-GPM content of 57% by weight to 99% by weight, and a syrup consisting of a mixture of hydrogenated starch hydrolyzate syrup and isomalt syrup or isomalt powder, the dry matter of the syrup consisting of 7-52% (weight/weight) 1,6-GPS, 24.5-52% (weight/weight) 1,1-GPM, 0-52% (weight/weight) 1,1-GPS, 0-13% (weight/weight) sorbitol, 2.8-13.8% (weight/weight) maltitol, 1.5-4.2% (weight/weight) maltotriitol and 3.0-13.5% (weight/weight) higher polyols.

16. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 1, wherein at least one of the chewing gum and the coating layer comprises one or more intense sweeteners.

17. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 16, wherein the intense sweetener is selected from the group consisting of cyclamate, saccharin, aspartame, glycyrrhizin, neohesperidin dihydrochalcone, stevioside, thaumatin, monellin, acesulfame, alitame, sucralose, and mixtures thereof.

18. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 9 comprising from 2 to about 100 dragee-coated layers.

19. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 18, wherein each said dragee-coated layer comprises the same sweetener(s).

20. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 18, wherein each said dragee-coated sweetener layer comprises a different sweetener.

21. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim18, wherein each said individual dragee-coated layer is comprised of the same composite.

22. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 18, wherein each said individual dragee-coated layer is comprised of a different composite.

23. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 1, further comprising at least one fluoride salt.

24. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 1, further comprising at least one material selected from the group consisting of flavorings and fillers.

25. (Previously Presented) A method for producing the chewing gum of claim 1, said method comprising producing a chewing gum core and coating the chewing gum core with at least one layer which comprises a composite of a slightly water-soluble calcium salt and a protein component, which salt is selected from the group consisting of fluoroapatite, carbonate-containing nonstoichiometric apatite, hydroxyapatite and fluorine-doped hydroxyapatite, wherein the slightly water-soluble calcium salt has a particle size less than 1000 nm.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the chewing gum core is coated by at least one hard dragee-coating step.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the hard dragee-coating step comprises applying a solution or suspension which comprises at least one sweetener and the composite, and drying the solution or suspension.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the chewing gum core is coated, by means of at least one soft dragee-coating step.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein the soft dragee-coating step comprises applying a solution or suspension which comprises at least one sweetener, and then dusting the applied solution or suspension with a sweetener powder.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the applied solution or suspension comprises at least a portion of the total amount of the composite .

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the sweetener powder comprises at least a portion of the total amount of the composite.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein hard dragee-coating steps or soft dragee-coating steps are repeated several times.

Claim 33 (Canceled).

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the calcium salt has a particle size of 5 to 300 nm.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the coating layer comprises 0.001 to 5% by weight of the composite .

Claim 36 (Canceled).

37. (Previously Presented) A method for improving dental hygiene in a subject in need thereof, which comprises chewing, by said subject, of the chewing gum of claim 1.

38. (Previously Presented) A method for mineralizing the tooth enamel of a subject in need thereof, which comprises chewing, by said subject, of the chewing gum of claim 1.

39. (Previously Presented) A method for mineralizing the dentine of a subject in need thereof, which comprises chewing, by said subject, of the chewing gum of claim 1.

40. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 5, wherein the coating layer comprises 0.01 to 2% by weight of said coating material.

41. (Previously Presented) The chewing gum of claim 7, wherein the protein component is gelatin.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein the coating layer comprises 0.01 to 2% by weight of the at least one of the composite.